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RECIPE: Minestrone Soup

Looking for the perfect meal for a cold winter night? Try this cholesterol-free classic Italian vegetable soup full of heart-healthy, fiber-rich beans, peas, and carrots from the feds’ Stay Young at Heart program.

Ingredients

1/4 C	olive oil
1 clove	garlic, minced or 1/8 tsp garlic powder
1-1/3 C	coarsely chopped onion
1-1/2 C	coarsely chopped celery and leaves
1 can (6 oz)	tomato paste
1 Tbsp	chopped fresh parsley
1 C	sliced carrots, fresh or frozen
4-3/4 C	shredded cabbage
1 can (1 lb)	tomatoes, cut up
1 C	canned red kidney beans, drained/rinsed
1-1/2 C	frozen peas
1-1/2 C	fresh green beans
dash	hot sauce
11 C	water
2 C	uncooked, broken spaghetti

Preparation

- Heat oil in a 4-quart saucepan.
- Add garlic, onion, and celery and sauté about 5 minutes.
- Add all remaining ingredients except spaghetti, and stir until ingredients are well mixed.
- Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer about 45 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
- Add uncooked spaghetti and simmer 2-3 minutes only.

Yield: 16 one-cup servings

Nutrition Information:

Calories: 153
Total fat: 4 g
Saturated fat: less than 1 g
Cholesterol: 0 mg
Sodium: 191 mg



SMART LIVING with COPD

Winter 2011



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Warning: Smoking Causes Immediate Damage

Think you’re safe if you just smoke a little bit? Bad news. Exposure to tobacco smoke — even occasional smoking or inhaling someone else’s secondhand smoke — causes *immediate damage* that can lead to disease and death, the U.S. Surgeon General warns in a new report.

Cigarette smoke contains a deadly brew of 7,000 chemicals and compounds. Hundreds of them are poisonous and at least 70 cause cancer. *Each time* you take a puff or inhale secondhand smoke, these chemicals spread throughout your body, damaging blood vessels and cells in nearly every organ, according to the report.

“There is no risk-free level of exposure to tobacco smoke,” Regina Benjamin said in releasing her first report as Surgeon General. She cautioned that even a single puff or brief exposure to secondhand smoke causes heart disease and can trigger a heart attack, stroke or other cardiovascular event.

“The chemicals in tobacco smoke reach your lungs quickly every time you inhale causing damage immediately,” Benjamin said. She stressed that “inhaling even the smallest amount of tobacco smoke” can cause cellular damage that can lead to cancer.

Harmful effects. According to the report, tobacco smoke is responsible for 85 percent of lung cancers

and can cause cancer in any part of the body. It also causes or worsens more than a dozen chronic health conditions, including heart disease, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and migraine.

The report warns that tobacco smoke also:

- Makes it harder for diabetics to control their blood sugar
- Makes it harder to get pregnant
- Damages fetal lung and brain tissue
- Causes miscarriages and pre-term deliveries
- Ups the risk of sudden infant death syndrome

Worried? You should be. The good news is if you smoke, quitting will help. So will avoiding others’ smoke.

“This report makes it clear – quitting at any time gives your body a chance to heal the damage caused by smoking,” Benjamin said “It’s never too late to quit, but the sooner you do it, the better.”

So don’t smoke. And if you do — stop!

Need help kicking the habit? Talk to your doctor or check out smoking cessation programs online and in your community. You can also call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for help.

Are You *Really* Having a Stroke?

A stroke can happen any time and any place. Would you recognize if you or someone else were having one? Following are the warning signs. Learn them. And call 911 *right away* if you or someone else experience *any* of them.

Stroke warning signs:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arms or legs, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden dizziness, trouble walking, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

The symptoms may last or come and go.

Reduce your risk. An estimated 795,000 Americans suffer a new or recurring stroke every year. You can lower your risk of a first stroke by 80 percent by maintaining a healthy lifestyle, according to new guidelines issued by the American Heart and American Stroke associations. That means eating a

diet rich in fruits and veggies, exercising, keeping blood pressure in check and *not* smoking.

Stroke occurs when normal blood flow to the brain is interrupted. Brain cells die if blood can't bring them nutrients and oxygen.

There are two kinds of stroke. Most strokes are caused by blood clots. These are called ischemic strokes. The other type, called hemorrhagic stroke, is caused by a broken or leaking blood vessel in the brain. A common symptom of the latter is a very sudden, extremely painful headache.

Signs of ischemic stroke include sudden weakness on one side of the body and trouble talking, walking, seeing or thinking. Brain damage in ischemic strokes can be limited if patients are treated with a clot-busting drug called tissue plasminogen activator (tPA). But the drug must be administered *within three hours* of onset of stroke signs. So try to keep track of when symptoms start.



Work It Out: Exercise = Fewer Ills

Maybe this will get you moving. People who exercise on a regular basis not only reduce their odds of chunking up, but they also cut their risk of developing about *two dozen* physical and mental health conditions. They may also slow wear and tear on their bodies as they age, according to a new study.

The study, published in the *Journal of Clinical Practice*, cites extensive research showing that regular workouts can help reduce the risk of a slew of ills, including type 2 diabetes, heart and lung disease, stroke, depression, hypertension, obesity, migraine and bone-thinning osteoporosis.

In fact, researchers say that boosting physical activity is probably the best lifestyle choice you can make to improve your health aside from not smoking.

Recommendations. The study advises adults between the ages of 18 and 65 to shoot for

150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise a week. That's about a half hour of brisk walking five days a week.

People like joggers, who exercise more vigorously, should exercise at least 20 minutes, three times a week, according to the study. Healthy adults should also do two strength-training sessions (that work with the body's major muscle groups) a week.

The researchers said people should exercise throughout their lives, no matter their age.

So turn off your computer and TV – and start walking, swimming, cycling ...



Air Pollution Ups Risk of Severe COPD

A new study has found that exposure to low-level air pollution over time increases the risk of developing severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Scientists have long known that short-term exposure to high-level air pollution can make COPD worse. But until now, no studies had established a link between the disease and long-term exposure to low-level air pollution.

The Danish study was based on a review of data from 57,000 individuals between the ages of 50 and 64. The researchers reviewed traffic pollution reports and surveys about participants' health



and lifestyle habits. They also scoured hospital records to tally the number of people admitted for COPD symptoms.

The researchers found a link between all levels of air pollution and the incidence of COPD. The finding held up even when adjusted for risk factors, including smoking, which is the No. 1 cause of COPD. The risk of developing COPD was strongest in people with

pre-existing asthma and diabetes.

The findings were published in the online edition of the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*.

Buyers Beware: Smokers' Homes Polluted

Moving into a new home? Beware. It may have dangerous ghosts of smokers' past. A new study found that if previous occupants smoked, they probably left behind a trail of tobacco smoke pollutants.

University of San Diego researchers examined the homes of 50 nonsmokers and 100 smokers before and after they moved out. They measured levels of nicotine in the air and on participants' fingers. They also collected urine samples from nonsmoking residents and analyzed them for traces of cotinine, a tobacco smoke marker.

Thirdhand smoke. Their findings, published in the journal *Tobacco Control*: there were tobacco smoke pollutants – also called thirdhand smoke – in the dust and carpets as well as on the walls, ceilings and other surfaces of former smokers' homes.

This was the case even in homes that had been cleaned, re-painted and vacant for as long as *two months*.

Researchers also found that new residents had higher levels of nicotine and cotinine after they

moved into places where smokers once lived.

"The homes of smokers become reservoirs of tobacco smoke pollutants," study author Georg Matt said. "When new nonsmoking tenants come into contact with polluted surfaces and inhale suspended microscopic dust, they are unknowingly exposed to tobacco smoke toxins (poisons)."

Scientists are still assessing the potential dangers of thirdhand smoke. But researchers warn it could pose a special risk to babies who crawl on floors or suck on household items.

Studies have also shown that thirdhand smoke may be particularly dangerous for people with respiratory problems like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

